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*PLACE:*

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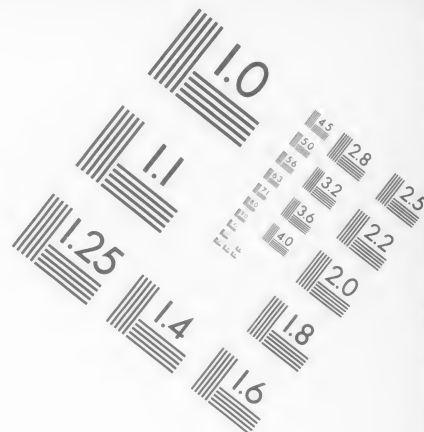
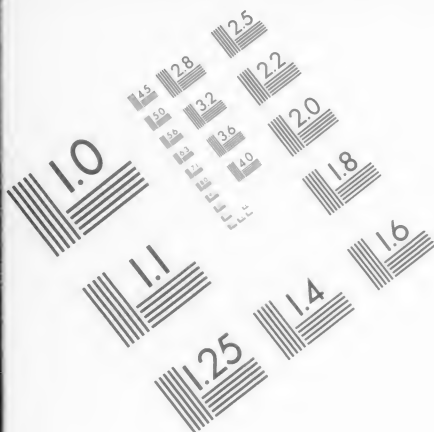


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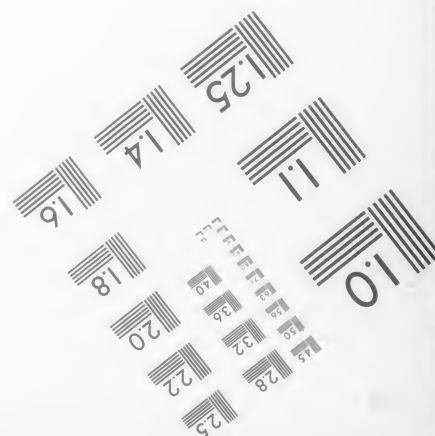
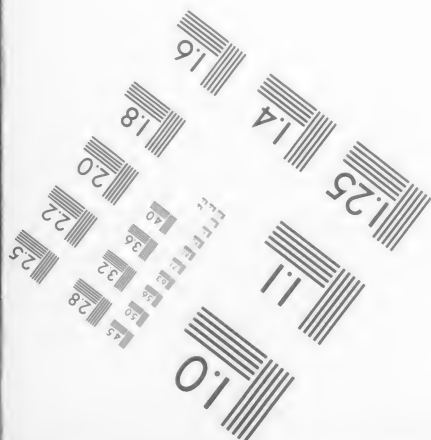
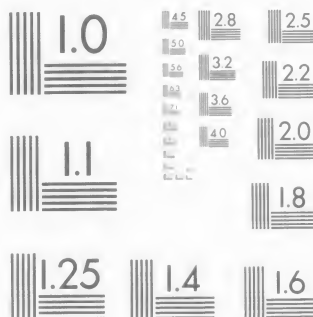
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No. 12.

**Catholic Question.**

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**LETTERS**

**ON**

**SECURITIES.**

**BY**

**ENEAS MACDONNELL, ESQ.,**

**AGENT OF THE CATHOLICS OF IRELAND.**

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**LONDON:**

**JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.**

**1829.**

CONNELL AND SHEARMAN, SALISBURY SQUARE.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE following Letters were, originally, published before the announcement of His Majesty's gracious dispositions towards his Catholic subjects. Their republication, in the present form, is not intended to intimate any distrust in the professions of the Government, but is considered a reasonable precaution, rendered adviseable on account of the absence of any declaration of the intentions of His Majesty's advisers, upon the subject of Securities.

The intense anxiety, notoriously felt and declared by the Catholics of Ireland regarding this subject, down to the latest moment, must constitute the justification of their Agent, when soliciting the attention of Members of the Legislature to the facts and observations embodied in these Letters.

Should such obnoxious measures have, unfortunately, obtained any favour in the Cabinet, I am not without hope, that a perusal of these Letters may induce a reconsideration of propositions, tending, directly, to neutralize the advantages of concession. On the other hand, should it, hereafter, appear, that I have assumed an uncalled for labour,



no person will exult more sincerely or more gratefully in that result, or welcome, more cordially than myself, the acceptable proof of the genuine liberality and sound policy of the proposed measures of relief.

A small tract is annexed to these Letters, in the expectation that it may be permitted to aid in the removal of British prejudices, and the promotion of British sympathies towards my country.

ENEAS MACDONNELL.

*London, February 23d, 1829.*

## LETTERS,

&c.

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### LETTER I.

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

As there appears to exist considerable misapprehension, in the public mind, respecting the objections entertained, by the Catholic body, to the arrangements generally designated Securities, I should feel much obliged by your permission to offer some observations upon the subject. In the first place, it is a great mistake to imagine, that the Catholic hostility to those measures is influenced, in the slightest degree, by a disposition to offend any person or party whatsoever, or to raise a factious opposition to them. We oppose them, because we consider them unnecessary, offensive, and mischievous. Upon these grounds the Catholics of Ireland have resisted them, and will continue to resist them. They feel that their religious and political interests are involved in this resistance. They have declared this feeling, year after year, for twenty years, and no reasonable man will insist, that a spirit of mere faction could have governed so large a body, for so long a period of time.

I am aware that some influential advisers have recommended, that the Catholics should abstain from noticing the subject, until distinct propositions are brought before them; but I cannot overlook the fact, that those advisers generally accompany that recommendation with two admissions: first, that they expect securities will be proposed; and, secondly, that they approve of their being

accepted: thus, appearing disposed to practise an unfair advantage over the great body of the Catholics, who are opposed to such measures.

If we could be assured, that Government would consult with us before any proposition would be made to Parliament, it would be reasonable to require from us obedience to such advice. But when no such promise is held out; surely, our only rational course is to state the present feelings of the Catholics upon the principle, generally, and upon those measures which have been proposed hitherto. By doing so, we inform Government of our views; and if they introduce measures hostile to them, they, not we, will be the aggressors; whereas, if we wait till the precise measures be proposed, and then, for the first time, announce our opinions adverse to them, then the Catholics will be the aggressors, and not the Government. Moreover, it would be obviously bad policy to wait until the Government became pledged to Parliament (and we should bear in mind that it is to Parliament, and not to us, the propositions will be made), and then, to have the great additional force of such a pledge opposed to us.

Common honesty requires that we should always speak candidly, and inform the Government, the Parliament, and the people of our feelings, which may be done without offence to a single member of the community, or prejudice to a single interest, Protestant or Catholic. I think that the propositions hitherto made may be set down in the following order:—

1st.—Jurisdiction or control of the Crown over the appointment of Bishops, and other Ecclesiastical Authorities, in the Catholic Church.

2d.—Control of the Crown over the intercourse between the Catholics and the Head of their Church in Rome.

3d.—State Provision for the Maintenance of the Catholic Clergy.

4th.—Disfranchisement of the Forty Shilling Freeholders of Ireland.

The two first have been under consideration during the last twenty years in Ireland, particularly the pro-

position of granting to the Crown an influence in the appointment of the Catholic Dignitaries. It is by far the most material of all; and, as such, shall receive my first consideration. I trust, that if it should appear that this measure is opposed by the Spiritual Heads of the Catholic Body in Ireland, by their Clergy and the entire community, no man will hesitate to doubt, but any attempt to enforce it by civil power would be direct, unmixed persecution. And if we find the Catholic opinions in Ireland sustained not only by Catholic Authorities in England, but also by Protestants of different parties, friends and foes, of high rank and estimation, it will not be too much, on my part, to insist, that their opposition is entitled to the respect and deference of the Parliament, and the Government.

On the 14th Sept. 1808, the Irish Catholic Prelates assembled in Synod, in consequence of the proposition made to Parliament, of admitting the Crown to exercise a Veto over the appointment of bishops, and they unanimously declared, "that it is inexpedient to introduce any alteration in the convenient mode, hitherto observed, in the nomination of the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops, which long experience has proved to be unexceptionable, wise, and salutary."

The letter of Lord Grenville to Lord Fingall, in favour of arrangements (now, I believe, abandoned by the noble writer), having been published on the 25th of January, 1810, again brought the subject under the consideration of the Catholic Body in both Islands, and the Irish rejected it in unmeasured terms of condemnation.

The Prelates assembled in Dublin on the 24th February, and agreed upon several Resolutions, and an "Address to the Clergy and Laity of the Roman Catholic Churches in Ireland." They "confirmed and declared their unaltered adherence to the Resolutions unanimously entered into, at their last meeting, on the 14th September, 1808." Those faithful pastors observed:—"it is most necessary to admonish our flocks, lest that Providence which has carried onward that paternal faith, through meritorious constancy, to the verge of freedom, henceforth abandon us, in the last moment of tempta-

tion, in punishment of yielding to unbelief and contradiction, now that we are relieved, by the mercy of law, from positive sufferings."

On the 12th November, 1812, they published another Pastoral Address, in which they declared, they would prefer the surrender of their lives to the surrender of the integrity of their religion, which they considered to be sought for by the proposed measure.

On the 26th May, 1813, the Catholic Bishops of Ireland published, in their Pastoral Address to the Clergy and Laity of the Roman Catholic Churches in Ireland, the following Resolutions, in reference to the Relief Bill of that year:—

"1. That, having seriously examined a copy of the Bill lately brought into Parliament, purporting to provide for the removal of the civil and military disqualifications under which his Majesty's Roman Catholics labour, we feel ourselves bound to declare, that certain Ecclesiastical Clauses or Securities, therein contained, are utterly incompatible with the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, and with the free exercise of our religion.

"2. That we cannot, without incurring the heavy guilt of schism, accede to such regulations; nor can we dissemble our dismay and consternation at the consequences which such regulations, if enforced, must necessarily produce."

They, at the same time, passed a Resolution, expressive of their continued esteem, confidence, and gratitude towards Dr. Milner; and the Catholics of Ireland, at an Aggregate Meeting held in Dublin, on the 15th June following, resolved, "That the warm approbation and gratitude of the Catholics of Ireland be conveyed to the Right Reverend Dr. Milner, for his manly, upright, and conscientious opposition to those Ecclesiastical regulations." Similar Resolutions of hostility to the Bill of 1813, and of gratitude to Dr. Milner for resisting it, were passed at all the Meetings held in Ireland, at that period.

The late Dr. Poynter, Vicar Apostolic of the London District, having made some communication to Rome,

received a reply thereto, from Signor Quarantotti, dated 10th February, 1814, recommending the acceptance of the Bill of 1813. I am not aware that Dr. Poynter ever published his own letter, but the answer from the Roman Prelate was immediately promulgated, and copies transmitted to the Irish Catholic Prelates. Upon the publication of this document, there was an universal outcry against it, throughout Ireland. Meetings were held by the Clergy in the different Dioceses, and also by the Laity, at which the measure was most loudly denounced.

The Prelates assembled in Maynooth, on the 27th May, and passed a Resolution, earnestly intreating Lord Donoughmore and Mr. Grattan, "that when the question of Catholic Emancipation shall be discussed in Parliament, they will exert their powerful talents in excluding from the Bill, intended for our relief, those clauses (in the Bill of 1813) which we have already deprecated, as severely penal to us, and highly injurious to our religion." The Synod, at the same time, deputed two Prelates to proceed, forthwith, to Rome, to convey their "unanimous and well-known sentiments," on this subject, to the Chief Pastor. The Irish Catholic Laity also forwarded a remonstrance to the Pope, against this Letter and injunction of Quarantotti.

The communications from Rome not having been satisfactory, the Prelates again assembled in Synod, on the 23d and 24th August, 1815, the Most Reverend Doctor Kelly, Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, President; and unanimously adopted the following Resolutions:—

"Resolved—That it is our decided and conscientious conviction, that any power granted to the Crown of Great Britain, of interfering, directly or indirectly, in the appointment of Bishops, for the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, must essentially injure, and may eventually subvert the Roman Catholic religion in this country.

"Resolved—That, with this conviction deeply and unalterably impressed on our minds, we should consider ourselves as betraying the dearest interests of that portion of the Church which the Holy Ghost has confided to our care, did we not declare, most unequivocally, that we will, at all times, and under all circumstances, deprecate

and oppose, in every canonical and constitutional way, any such interference."

These Resolutions were adopted and promulgated by twenty-eight Prelates, with their signatures affixed thereunto. Nor did they rest there; for they added two other Resolutions, well worthy of being deliberately considered by those politicians of our times, who imagine, that they can settle the question by concordats or arrangements surreptitiously obtained, without the privity of the Irish Prelates. The additional Resolutions were the following:—

"Resolved—That though we sincerely venerate the Supreme Pontiff, as visible Head of the Church, we do not conceive that our apprehensions, for the safety of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, can or ought to be removed by any determination of his Holiness, adopted, or intended to be adopted, not only without our concurrence, but in direct opposition to our repeated Resolutions, and the very energetic Memorial presented on our behalf, and so ably supported by our Deputy, the Most Rev. Dr. Murray; who, in that quality, was more competent to inform his Holiness of the real state and interests of the Roman Catholic Church, in Ireland, than any other with whom he is said to have consulted.

"Resolved—That a declaration of these our sentiments, respectful, firm, and decided, be transmitted to the Holy See, which, we trust, will engage his Holiness to feel and acknowledge the justness and propriety of this our determination."

These Resolutions were almost immediately communicated by the Prelates to the Catholic Board then sitting, and the people at large, and received throughout Ireland with most enthusiastic delight, which was declared from meetings of the Clergy and Laity, convened in every quarter of the island.

At the same time that the Prelates promulgated those solemn Resolutions, they also presented an Address to the Prince Regent, in which they say—"We cannot but be surprised and alarmed that, under the pretence of securing the loyalty of our body, an intention has been manifested of compelling us, in direct opposition to the

dictates of our consciences, to submit, in the event of Catholic Emancipation, to the interference, of persons of a different religious persuasion, in the appointment of the principal Ministers of our Church. *Such a measure, may it please your Royal Highness, would only substitute for one mode of servitude another still more galling and oppressive.* The political freedom of Irish Roman Catholics might be enlarged; but their religious freedom, which they hold incomparably more dear, would be materially diminished. *Under such a restriction, the most extensive concession of temporal advantages would be followed by continual heart-burnings and discontent."*

After the second Deputation had returned from Rome, the Prelates again assembled, in Kilkenny, on the 26th April, 1816, and resolved to petition both Houses of Parliament, "most earnestly praying them to resist any application which may be made to the Legislature to grant to the Crown, or the servants of the Crown of Great Britain, any legal power of interference in the appointment of Roman Catholic Bishops, in Ireland." They, at the same time, declared that the proposed arrangement is full of danger to the Church of which they are Pastors."

As the Resolutions passed by the Second Order of the Clergy and the Laity, in support of the Prelates, and in hostility to those mis-called securities, would occupy a large space, and their general spirit cannot be unknown to any Member of the Legislature, I deem it unnecessary to insert them, or observe any more respecting them, further than to aver their enthusiastic coincidence with the sentiments embodied in the above Resolutions.

It is further to be noted, that the Prelates evinced their abhorrence of those measures, upon every occasion that furnished them, individually, with an opportunity of making known their feelings. One or two instances will suffice. Dr. Moylan, late Catholic Bishop of Cork, universally esteemed for great virtue and personal worth, addressed a letter (in reply) to Sir John Cox Hhippsley, dated 8th May, 1811, in which he observed:—

"You consider the proceedings in Dublin (I presume you mean the Resolutions entered into by the Roman

Catholic Prelates last year) as calculated to do much mischief to the interests of our Body. They may, indeed, injure us in the opinion of those, who, like Lord Redesdale, wish to destroy the Catholic Hierarchy in Ireland, and in the opinion of those who wish to render our bishops mere tools and slaves to the caprice of every man in power, and of every Orange Magistrate in the kingdom; but to such as have no views hostile to our religious Establishment, and to those who have the peace and tranquillity of our country at heart, the conduct of the Prelates, at that Meeting, should appear most expedient.

"Should they (the Prelates), for any worldly consideration whatsoever, be so forgetful of their charge, and so insensible to the support of their religion as to consent, even if they had the power—which they have not, without the consent of the Holy See—to grant any interference whatsoever, to the Minister of the day, in the appointment of Irish Roman Catholic Bishops, there can be no doubt but Bishops, thus appointed, would lose all influence over the Catholic people of this kingdom; for their flocks would no longer consider them the shepherds, appointed by the Catholic Church, to lead them into the ways of eternal salvation; but *mercenary hirelings, unworthy of their respect or confidence.*

"It is reported, but I can give no credit to the report, that the alterations, intended to be made in our Church discipline and Government, are to be enforced against us by Acts of Parliament. *If so, we must only prepare for a new persecution on account of our religion;* and I trust that, in such an event, our Prelates will prove themselves worthy of their dignified state, by cheerfully suffering every sort of persecution, as their predecessors have done, rather than consent to any encroachment on the spiritual independence of their Hierarchy—an independence so necessary to the respect and existence of their religion."

In another letter, written by the same most venerable Prelate to one of his brethren, attending in Rome as one of the Deputies from the Irish Episcopal Body, dated Dec. 4, 1814, he uses the following solemn and emphatic expressions:—

"I am the oldest of the Catholic Prelates in this kingdom, and expect soon to appear before the awful Tribunal of the Almighty Judge—in whose sacred presence I solemnly declare, that any compromise made, or control whatsoever given, to our Protestant Government or Ministers, in the appointment or nomination of the Catholic Bishops or Clergy of this kingdom, or any interference whatsoever, or influence over them, in the exercise of their spiritual functions, will eventually lead to the subversion of our venerable Hierarchy, and, in consequence, to the ruin of the Catholic religion, in this long-suffering and oppressed Catholic country."

In the same spirit of virtuous zeal and anxiety, the present Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Murray, a Prelate whose great abilities and acquirements are excelled only by his Christian amenity and benevolence, availed himself of the most solemn occasion, to raise from the pulpit his warning voice to some mistaken Catholics, who had, inconsiderately, yielded to delusions too artfully practised upon them. When preaching a sermon upon Good Friday, in the year 1816, and having arrived at that part of our Divine Redeemer's passion where he is represented as bound to a pillar, the Most Reverend Preacher said—"To this bound and suffering victim I would now implore the attention of those misguided Catholics, who seem willing to impose new and disgraceful bonds, not, indeed, on his sacred person, but on his mystical body—that is, his Church, which was ever more dear to him than even his life. . . . . I know that our mistaken brethren would not consent to yield up any point which they deem essential, and that they look not beyond what they consider safe and honourable conciliation. But, unhappily, it is now too well known that the conciliation, which is expected, is such as would imply the degradation and enslavement of the sacred Ministry. And what virtuous Catholic would consent to purchase the chance of temporal advantages, at the price of such a real spiritual calamity? Oh, if the stroke must come, let it come from those who have so long sought the extinction of our religion—but, in the name of God, let no Catholic press forward to share in the inglorious work—let no one among



us be found to say of his Church, as the treacherous disciple said of its Divine Founder, 'What will you give me, and I will deliver (it) unto you?'"

Thus we find this proposition, of granting to the British Crown, or rather to the friends of the Minister, a control over the appointment of the Irish Catholic Prelates, repeatedly discussed, and as often deprecated by that body, in unison with their Clergy, and the Catholic People of Ireland. This opposition cannot be fairly set down as hasty and captious. For more than twenty years has the subject engaged their continued attention, and their hostility to the proposition is unaltered and unalterable. If my opinions upon this point be doubted, let the Catholic Prelates of Ireland be again appealed to by the Government, and their flocks will cheerfully abide the result, with undiminished confidence in their integrity. I am as certain of their adherence to their former Resolutions, as I am of my existence. Would not it then be most idle and unjust to make such an inadmissible scheme the basis or associate of any measure of emancipation? It will, assuredly, be met and treated as a fresh persecution; and if there be any person who seeks to persuade the Government that it will be quietly acceded to, after a little time, that man practises most unworthy deceit, or is himself much deceived. Neither let it be imagined that the Irish Catholics are, or were, the only opponents to the proposition. It is well known that the late Dr. Milner, an illustrious English Prelate, was a most zealous opponent to it; others of his order were equally hostile, and it may be truly asserted, that the great body of the British Catholic Clergy and people concurred with their Irish fellow-sufferers.

The Right Rev. Dr. Collingridge, Vicar Apostolic of the western district, in his pastoral Address to the Clergy and Laity of his district, dated April 13, 1817, objects to the Legislature "being influenced by precedents drawn from countries that are strangers to the liberties of the British Constitution;" and declares, that he "could not refrain from manifesting his deep regret, that clauses had been introduced into the draft of the Bill, that was prepared for our emancipation in 1813, to which it was impossible we ever could give our approbation or consent."

The venerable Prelate thus proceeds: "As official guardian of the interests of the Catholic Church in the western district, we have felt ourselves called upon by strict duty thus to reiterate to you our former instructions; and, moreover, in the present circumstances, to seriously warn you against the opinion, that you may conscientiously assent to regulations respecting the concerns of your religion, on the mere ground that similar regulations have occasionally been made and enforced in foreign States. At no time, my beloved brethren and children in Jesus Christ, have we felt ourselves called upon to attend to our high charge, of guarding inviolate the sacred deposit of religion, with more vigilance and fidelity than at present; wherefore, we again most earnestly exhort, and strictly charge all those among you who may have influence, to employ the same by every legal and peaceable means, to prevent the insertion of clauses, in any eventual Bill for Catholic Emancipation, that may be any ways repugnant to the present discipline of the Church, and most particularly such as may tend to give, in any degree, the power of nomination of Catholic Bishops to a Prince who is by law the head of a different religious establishment, or to impede that free intercourse on all ecclesiastical matters which must subsist between the chief Bishop and the Members of the Catholic Church; for we cannot but view and deprecate such clauses as pregnant with consequences that may prove highly injurious to our holy religion."

Neither let this united British and Irish Catholic opposition to the measure be condemned or scoffed at, as a mere Sectarian or Popish insubordination. No Catholics have been more decided in their resistance to it than some Protestants, and those, too, men of high station in the political world, governed by their regard to the peace and prosperity of the State, generally, not of any particular sect alone.

The following extracts from a letter of the late Right Hon. Edmund Burke, written, I believe, in 1782, and addressed to Lord Kenmare, deserve most respectful consideration. They prove the proposition to be long agitated, and also that his views of it were equally deliberate and decided.

The Right Honourable Gentleman observes, "Before I had written thus far, I heard of a scheme of giving to the Castle the patronage of the presiding members of the Catholic Clergy. At first I could scarcely credit it; for I believe it is the first time that the presentation of other people's alms has been desired in any country. . . *Never were the members of one religious sect fit to appoint the pastors to another.* Those who have no regard for their welfare, reputation, or internal quiet, will not appoint such as are proper. . . . Allowing the present Castle finds itself fit to administer the government of a Church which they solemnly forswear, and forswear with very hard words and many evil epithets, and that as often as they qualify themselves for the power which is to give this very patronage, or to give any thing else which they desire; yet they cannot insure themselves that a man like the late Lord Chesterfield will not succeed to them. This man, while he was duping the credulity of Papists with fine words in private, and commending their good behaviour during a rebellion in Great Britain, as it well deserved to be commended and rewarded, was capable of urging penal laws against them in a speech from the Throne, and stimulating with provocatives the wearied and half-exhausted bigotry of the then Parliament of Ireland. . . . Suppose an Atheist, playing the part of a bigot, should be in power again in that country, do you believe that he would faithfully and religiously administer the trust of appointing pastors to a church, which, wanting every other support, stands in tenfold need of ministers who will be dear to the people committed to their charge, and who will exercise a really paternal authority amongst them? But, if the superior power was always in a disposition to dispense conscientiously, and like an upright trustee and guardian of these rights, which he holds for those with whom he is at variance, has he the capacity and means of doing it? How can the Lord Lieutenant form the least judgment of their merits, so as to discover which of popish priests is fit to be made a bishop? It cannot be—the idea is ridiculous! He will hand them over to Lords Lieutenants of Counties, Justices of the Peace, and other persons, who, for

the purpose of vexing, and turning to derision this miserable people, will pick out the worst and most obnoxious they can find amongst the clergy, to set over the rest. Whoever is complainant against his brother will be considered as persecuted; whoever is censured by his superior will be looked upon as oppressed; whoever is careless in his opinions and loose in his morals, will be called a liberal man, and will be supposed to have incurred hatred, because he was not a bigot. Informers, tale-bearers, perverse and obstinate men, flatterers, who turn their back upon their flock, and court the Protestant gentlemen of the county, will be the objects of preferment; and *then I run no risk in foretelling, that whatever order, quiet, and morality you have in the country will be lost.* A Popish Clergy, who are not restrained by the most austere subordination, will become a nuisance, a real public grievance, of the heaviest kind, in any country that entertains them; and *instead of the great benefit which Ireland does, and has long derived from them, if they are educated without any idea of discipline and obedience, and then put under Bishops who do not owe their station to their good opinion, and whom they cannot respect, that nation will see disorders, of which, bad as things are, it has not yet an idea.* I do not say this, as thinking the leading men in Ireland would exercise this trust worse than others; not at all—no man, no set of men living, are fit to administer the affairs, or regulate the interior economy of a church to which they are enemies.

"As to Government, if I might recommend a prudent caution to them, it would be, to innovate as little as possible upon speculation, in establishments, from which, as they stand, they experience no material inconvenience to the repose of the country—*quieta non movere.*"

No person worthy of political station can refuse to give to these opinions of Mr. Burke the most respectful attention, or to deny to them an influence almost governing. They manifestly speak the language of common sense.

In more recent times, other eminent Protestants have

expressed similar opinions. I shall confine myself, for the present, to the following extracts from the late Lord Donoughmore's Letter to the Irish Catholics, dated March 12th, 1817:—"No consideration," says his Lordship, "shall ever induce me to purchase for you the civil privileges, by the concession of a veto to the Ministers of the Crown.... To the veto I have an unconquerable repugnance, as entirely uncalled for, and, therefore an unjustifiable innovation; and, because I am sure that it would work ill, and introduce Court intrigue into the sanctuary of that Church from which it has been as yet excluded. I would resist it also on another account; because I am fully persuaded that, by making them on whom it would be inflicted, less pure and uninfluenced in the selection of their own moral and religious instructors, it would not be calculated, on that account, to improve them much in the relations in which they stand, as subjects to the Protestant State.... They (the Prelates) will not make a less favourable estimate, as I hope and trust, of the zeal of their advocate, because he will not condescend to entertain any unseemly compromise whatever on their behalf, nor submit the most important situations of the Roman Catholic Church to the licenser of the Court, whoever he may happen to be, in this Provincial Government."

Neither was this veto security approved by the most influential opponents of the Catholics. Mr. Peel, if I mistake not, has more than once declared in Parliament that he sets no value on it; and Lord Liverpool was still more distinct, in his disapprobation of that course of policy which would connect obnoxious conditions with any measures of grace or favour, that Parliament might be pleased to extend to the Catholics. In his speech on the 17th of May, 1819, his Lordship declared that "he always thought the Catholics right in objecting to the veto, while he felt that the enactment of such a measure would afford no security whatever to the Protestants."

I apprehend that the most zealous of our opponents must admit, that I have made out a good cause of justifi-

cation for the resistance manifested by the Irish Catholics to this proposition; and that I have shewn that their resistance cannot be fairly set down as factious or querulous. I shall resume the subject in another letter.

Your obedient servant,

ENEAS MACDONNELL.

## LETTER II.

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

THE objection entertained by the Catholics of the United Kingdom to the admission of any right in the Ministers of the Crown to direct or control the appointment of their Prelates are two-fold—religious and political. They feel that, as Catholics, such an authority could not be endured by them, or conceded to men whose policy is irreconcilable with a due regard to the essential qualifications for such sacred offices; and, as citizens—and, above all, as Irish citizens—they are opposed to measures which would extend the influence of aristocratic power, of the worst order, over the only class of society in their country that has hitherto escaped from such contamination. There is no impartial man that will not admit that the people of Ireland have been much more afflicted by the internal Church Establishment of Protestantism, than by the external Church connexion of Catholicism. Yet, under the pretence—for it is no more than pretence—of securing the State against evils that may, we are told, possibly arise from the latter, the minds of honest men are diverted, by specious theories, from contemplating the existing practical injuries inflicted upon that people.

This is a common practice with the managers of Anglo-Irish policy. They endeavour, and generally with too much success, to place the injured party in the position of defence, and to subject the actual sufferers to all the taunts and reproaches of an odious inquisition, as if they



were the votaries, and not the victims, of the system which generates the admittedly indefensible state of society in Ireland. This position will be found to be most abundantly, and not less unhappily illustrated, in the examinations instituted by Parliamentary Committees into the state of Ireland, in which every Catholic witness, without, I believe, one solitary exception, is made a defendant against false representations, instead of a complainant against odious and extensive injustice and oppression.

In the same spirit the outcry is raised, at the present day, against the connexion between the Catholic subjects of our King and the head of their Church, merely because he resides out of this realm; and to provide against this circumstance, we are taunted with a demand of two of those securities—namely, the right of interference in our ecclesiastical appointments, and the right of inspecting all communications between the See of Rome and the Irish portion of the Catholic Church. As to the latter, it is quite absurd to expect that such an inquisition will be tolerated; and it is not to be forgotten, that the See of Rome has already declared, by the letter of Cardinal Letta, dated Genoa, 26th April, 1815, that such a proposition “cannot become the subject even of a discussion.”

This proposition becomes the less tolerable, when it is known, as stated in that letter, that one of the primary instructions from the Sovereign Pontiff to the Prelates, is, that in their communications with the Holy See they never shall advert to any thing that may regard the political state of the country. One must suppose, pursuant to this doctrine, that if Christ had postponed his sacred mission to the present day, no British subject could be permitted to become a Christian, because, forsooth, Judæa is not situated in England!

The manner in which this subject is treated by our opponents, is generally most indecent and discreditable: the profession of alarm is, I verily believe, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, sheer affectation. The outcry against foreign connexion is downright hypocrisy with many of them. They raise no complaint against foreign connexion in any other instance, although they might,

with at least equal semblance of propriety, object to foreign intercourse of every kind, as to the spiritual intercourse with Rome. As well may they object to our commercial dealings with the subjects of Foreign States, to travelling in foreign countries, to loans to foreign Governments, to foreign alliances, to holding possessions in foreign countries, as the Duke of Wellington holds in Spain and Portugal; or to the acceptance of foreign civil or military orders, or other honourable distinctions.

These sensitive guardians of our internal security may, with far more appearance of sincerity, object to the divided Government of a British King, between the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Hanover, than to what they are pleased, most incorrectly, to designate the divided allegiance of that King's Catholic subjects between his Majesty and the Sovereign Pontiff. How must their patriotic sensibilities be shocked to find their Sovereign a Knight of no less than fourteen foreign orders! viz.—

The Elephant, of Denmark.

Black Eagle, of Prussia.

William, of the Netherlands.

St. Andrew, St. Anan, St. Alexander Newski, of Russia.

Golden Fleece, of Austria.

Charles III., of Spain.

St. Ferdinand and Merit, of Sicily.

Christ, St. Bento d'Avis, St. Jago, Tower and Sword, of Portugal.

St. Esprit, of France.

Of these orders, two only are strictly Protestant, while not less than eight are strictly Popish!! And to add to the awful and alarming circumstances of this multiplied foreign and Popish connexion, they must shudder at the contemplation of the appalling fact, that the 14th Statute of the last named order (St. Esprit) marks the character and duties of the Knight in the following words:—“*Nul ne pourra estre fait Commandeur, et recevoir l'habit dudit Ordre, si notoirement il ne fait profession de ladite Religion Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine, et n'ait protesté vouloir vivre et mourir en icelle!!!*”

What will be said of this intimation by the high and mighty Lords of Kenyon, Newcastle, Winchelsea, Bexley, Chandos, Exmouth, and Colchester, who have been graciously pleased to take the King, the Church, the Constitution, the people and the State into their holy keeping?!!

These "Seven Champions of Christendom" now lead the cry against Pope and Popery, and affect to dread an intercourse with the Sovereign Pontiff, as full of danger to this empire, at the same time that they join in all the rude and vulgar reproaches uttered against the visible head of the Catholic Church.—Yet, if they had an object to obtain, they would not be restrained by such fears from courting the same power, in the most servile terms. It is notorious that the Lord of Colchester was one of the most humble adulators, while in Rome; and the Lord of Exmouth, notwithstanding the attachment he now professes towards the Brunswickers of Exeter, and to their No-Popery doctrines, by his letter of the 14th of last November, was, "once upon a time," not indifferent to the value of Popish friendship, or even to the efficacy of a Pope's prayers. Really, these Brunswickers, like certain other folk, should have good memories. Who could imagine that the Lord of Exmouth, a hater of Pope and Popery, could ever have been the author of the following letter to the Pope!! Gentle reader, hear the Lord of Exmouth:—

*Letter of Lord Exmouth to Pope Pius VII., dated Algiers, the 31st of August (1816), on board the Queen Charlotte:—*

"MOST HOLY FATHER—I have the honour of informing your Holiness, for your satisfaction, of the success of the expedition against Algiers, confided to my command. *Christian Slavery is abolished for ever*; I have, in consequence, the satisfaction of sending back to their families 173 slaves, your subjects. I hope they will be an agreeable present to your Holiness, and that they will give me a claim to the efficacy of your prayers.

"EXMOUTH."

Can any thing prove more clearly the utter inconsistency of this party than such a document? Here we behold a man denouncing seven or eight millions of his fellow

subjects as unworthy of being admitted to the full enjoyment of civil rights, because they are in spiritual communion with one to whose prayers he, himself, endeavours to establish a claim!! And the same man who exultingly boasted that "Christian slavery is abolished for ever," (and that, too, by himself,) connects himself with a party, who insist that Christian slavery is essential to the maintenance of the constitution; that seven millions of the king's subjects are slaves, and should be continued in bondage; that the Church requires it, and the law commands it!!! He may allege that Ireland is not enslaved; but there is higher authority than a Brunswicker on the other side of that question. The late Right Honourable Edmund Burke, in his letter to Dr. Hussey (in the year 1797), distinctly designates Ireland as an "enslaved country."

It is not surprising that Lord Colchester should manifest an Anti-Irish spirit. His Lordship has the peculiar merit of having been the only Chief Secretary for Ireland who had a mind to devise, and a tongue to propose, a measure of Irish Government too strong for the adoption even of a British Parliament. His Lordship will readily recognize in this position a reference to his proceeding in Parliament, on the 10th of June, 1801, when his superiors in the Government disclaimed any connexion with his scheme of martial law, while the late Mr. Ponsonby denounced it as "a monstrous and abominable proposition, unprecedented not only in the worst times of Ireland, but in the worst times of England; in the days of the most Gothic barbarism, in times of the most infuriated bigotry and political rancour that ever disgraced the annals of this realm;" and Mr. (now Earl) Grey added, that "from the principles he (Lord Colchester) manifested, no tranquillity was to be expected in any country committed to his direction."—(Plowden, p. 99—100.)

That such a man should be a Brunswicker is not strange. Nay, it is meet and just that he should hold high station amongst the enemies of Irishmen; but, surely, it will be conceded, on all hands, that he is inadmissible as a judge or a witness, when the interests and character of Catholic Ireland are put upon trial.

I have wandered somewhat from my intended course of observations, but the digression will be excused by those who set any value upon character, in estimating the pretensions of the men who assume to be specially qualified for the direction of the public mind.

Those who are really anxious to deal fairly with the principles and conduct of their Catholic countrymen, will not submit to the blind guidance of the "Seven Champions," collectively or individually, but rather ground their judgment upon their own observations; and if they find that the spiritual communion subsisting between Catholics and the See of Rome does not produce any results injurious to the State, they will decline being connected with the violent men who would put the fame and interests of this United Empire at hazard, rather than do an act of justice, or deny to their own factious bigotry a gross and barbarous indulgence.

As I may, in another letter, return to this subject of Ecclesiastical Securities, I shall not detain you longer at present, than to point your attention to the oath taken by Catholics, in which they, in the most solemn terms, disavow the odious doctrines and practices imputed to them; and it is worthy of observation, that upon this point of the civil power or influence of the Pope in these Realms, the Catholics of Ireland have, in our own times, furnished a practical proof of their opinions and principles, more deserving of the consideration of any honest and impartial Legislator than all the assertions of all their enemies put together.

I allude to the Address and Remonstrance forwarded to the late Pope by the Catholics of Ireland, and dated so late as September 16, 1815, in which they assert their feelings in the following explicit terms, in reference to the published communication from Rome, on the same subject of securities:—"We feel that we should be wanting in the practice of that candour, which it is our pride to profess, were we not further to inform your Holiness, that we have ever considered our claims for political emancipation to be founded upon principles of civil policy. We seek to obtain from our Government nothing more than the restoration of temporal rights; and

must, most humbly, but *most firmly, protest against the interference of your Holiness, or any other foreign Prelate, State, or Potentate in the control of our temporal conduct, or in the arrangement of our political concerns.*

"We, therefore, deem it unnecessary, most Holy Father, to state to your Holiness the manifold objections of a political nature which we feel towards the proposed measure. We have confined ourselves in this Memorial to the recapitulation of objections founded upon spiritual considerations; because, as on the one hand, we refuse to submit our religious concerns to the control of our Temporal Chief, so, on the other hand, *we cannot admit any right on the part of the Holy See to investigate our political principles, or to direct our political conduct; it being our earnest desire and fixed determination to conform, at all times, and under all circumstances, to the injunctions of that sacred ordinance which teaches us to distinguish between spiritual and temporal authority, "giving unto Cæsar those things which belong to Cæsar, and unto God those things which belong to God."*

This address and remonstrance to the Pope was framed and proposed by myself, as was well known to the Catholics of Ireland, at the time when they did me the honour of selecting me as their Agent. The opinions I then expressed in this document I still retain, and I hold them in common with every Catholic in Ireland. They are embodied in the doctrines delivered by the Catholic priests of Ireland to their flocks, as may be fairly deduced from the following extract from the "Summary of Catholic Principles," contained in the Catholic prayer-book compiled by the Right Rev. Dr. Coppinger, the present most venerable Catholic Bishop of Cloyne, in which he instructs his flock in the following words:—

"Nor do Catholics, as Catholics, believe that the Pope has any *direct or indirect* authority over the temporal power and jurisdiction of princes. Hence, if the Pope should pretend to absolve or dispense with his Majesty's subjects from their allegiance, on account of heresy or schism, *such dispensation would be vain and null, and all Catholic subjects, notwithstanding such dispensation or absolution, would be still bound, in conscience, to defend*

*their king and country, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, (as far as Protestants would be bound) even against the Pope himself; should he invade the nation."*

Thus, do the Catholics of Ireland manifest the sincerity of the oaths by which they are bound to an undivided civil allegiance to their Sovereign; at the same time that they give proof of their determination never, under any circumstances, or for any political advantages, to sanction or submit to any measure of arrangement or condition that may endanger or embarrass their spiritual communion with the chief pastor of their Church; and by this honest and candid deportment, they prove the total absence of any necessity for those securities which their enemies demand from them.

Your obedient servant,  
ENEAS MACDONNELL.

### LETTER III.

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

THE third of the proposed Securities is a provision for the support of the Catholic Prelates and Clergy, out of the public revenue. Our opposition to this measure is manifold, direct, and unalterable. We are unwilling to have our Clergy become the stipendiaries of the Crown, or burthens upon the people of Great Britain. We have no wish that they should be placed in connexion or contact with State Authorities; and this caution is by no means mitigated by the reflection, that the proposition originated with the most acrimonious of our political and religious opponents. For, though we hold their opinions and principles in very humble estimation, yet we have so much respect for their foresight as to feel assured, that they would not suggest any such measure, without having previously ascertained it to be injurious to our interests. Upon this subject, as upon every other Irish subject, the

great excellence and object of English instruction appears to have been to teach the people to be ignorant. I shall endeavour to pursue an opposite course; and, for that purpose, request your consideration of the state of the Catholic portion of the population in the United Kingdom. In a small pamphlet, to be had in the British Museum, intitled "A Letter from Duke Schomburgh's Camp, giving an Account of the Condition of the English and Irish Army, and a True Account of all the Papists in Ireland, their Number and Estates in Ireland, &c.; from the Camp at Dundalk, November 4, 1689;" published in London in the same year—the writer states, that "the whole of them (Papists), men, women, and children, are but one million; of which 40 or 50,000 in arms. There are four Titular Archbishops, 23 Bishops, and 2,328 Parish Priests."

At present, notwithstanding all the labours of Church and Parliament to prevent the growth of Popery, the Irish Papists exceed six times that amount; and, if the number of their Clergy were to be upheld in the same proportion as in that age of persecution, they should, of course, amount to 13,968; or, stating them in round numbers, to about 14,000. But estimating the necessary number at *even a third* of the proportion that existed, according to this writer, in 1689, there would be still 4,656, exclusive of Bishops and other dignitaries, to be supported by the State, should this proposition be adopted by Parliament.

Passing from Ireland to England, we find the number of Papists in the latter country, at the same period, set forth in the official Report found in the iron chest of King William III., and published by Sir John Dalrymple in his Memoirs.

The numbers are thus stated:—

In the province of Canterbury	-	23,740
Ditto York	-	3,956

Total of Papists in England - 27,696

We are informed, by the same official report, that the total number of Papists then in England, and fit to bear arms, was—

In the province of Canterbury	-	4,239
Ditto York	-	701
Total	-	4,940

The efforts to prevent the growth of Popery in England, since that period, do not appear to have been more successful than those made in Ireland. It will be seen in the sequel of this letter, that there are at present not less than 456 Catholic congregations in Great Britain, of which there are 393 in England alone; and I can, with perfect safety, aver, that one of those congregations, namely, the district of Moorfields, in the city of London, contains, at this day, a larger number of Catholics than existed in all England in the year 1689, according to this official Report. The Catholic baptisms in that district of Moorfields, for the year 1828, amounted to 920; and as the official returns of the year 1820 state the baptisms of the Metropolis to amount to 30,422, and the population to 1,469,692, being an average of one baptism to forty-eight of the population, we should, of course, (according to this official computation, for the accuracy of which I am not accountable,) estimate the Catholic congregation of Moorfields at 44,160; being 16,464 more Catholics than all England contained in the year 1689. There are two other Catholic congregations in the metropolis—namely, Virginia-street and St. George's-fields—each of which, according to this average, would be found to contain a greater number of Catholics than the amount for all England in 1689. The Catholic congregations of London and its vicinity amount to twenty-five, and the baptisms for the last year were about 4,500, which, multiplied by 48, would produce 216,000, as the total amount of the Catholic population of the metropolis; of which nearly 200,000 are either natives of Ireland or the children of Irish parents, being about one-seventh of the population of the metropolis.

In the same Official Report of William III., the proportionate numbers of Conformists, Non-conformists, and Papists, is stated thus:—

Proportion of Conformists to Papists	-	178	10-13	to 1
Conformists to Non-conformists	-	22	4-5	to 1
Conformists and Non-conformists to Papists	186	2-3	to 1	

I apprehend that were an accurate statement of the proportions of Churchmen, Protestant Dissenters, and Catholics of the United Kingdom to be made out now, the numbers of these respective classes would prove to be nearly the same; and were none but strict followers of the Established Church (confined to her doctrines and worship,) to be counted as her members, there can be no doubt but the Catholics would prove to be the most numerous religious community of the United Kingdom, although treated by Parliament as the lowest of all in rank or influence.

Coming now to the question more immediately under consideration, I shall, in the first instance, submit a sketch of the Catholic Ecclesiastical Establishments of the United Kingdom; and I do this the more readily, because I am not aware that Parliament, or the British public, has a correct idea of the extent of the incumbrance upon the public revenue which a State provision for the Catholic Clergy would, necessarily, create.

At present the Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland is by no means sufficiently supplied; the benefices (very many, of necessity, Unions,) amounting only to 981, being an average of more than seven thousand souls in each, and generally scattered over large tracts of country. The following will be found to be a correct account of the number of benefices in the Catholic diocese of Ireland:—

Diocese.	Number of Benefices.	Diocese.	Number of Benefices.
Ardagh.....	41	Galway (Wardenship).....	13
Armagh.....	49	Killaloe.....	49
Ardfert and Aghadoc.....	41	Kilmore.....	44
Achonry.....	20	Killala.....	25
Cloyne.....	54	Kildare and Leighlin.....	46
Clonfert.....	23	Kilfenora and Kilmacdaugh.....	15
Cork.....	34	Limerick.....	40
Clogher.....	34	Meath.....	64
Cashel and Emly.....	47	Ossory.....	27
Derry.....	34	Raphoe.....	24
Down and Connor.....	35	Tuam.....	48
Dromore.....	17	Waterford.....	37
Dublin.....	46		
Elphin.....	38		981
Ferns.....	36		

Were the benefices to be increased to 1,500, the con-



gregations would still average 4,600 souls each; and when I estimate the necessary number of parochial Clergy at only 4,500 for all Ireland—namely, 1,500 parish priests and 3,000 curates, no reasonable man can refuse to admit the moderation of my allowance. A contrast with the Church Establishments of England, Ireland, Scotland, or France, would place this fact beyond doubt.

The Episcopal Catholic Establishment of Ireland is, at present, as follows:—

Archbishops .....	4
Bishops .....	22
Warden .....	1
Coadjutor Bishops .....	5

Total ..... 32

To these must be added twenty-six Deans, and an equal number of Archdeacons; so that the number and stations of Catholic Ecclesiastics to be sustained by a State provision in Ireland, would be—

Archbishops .....	4
Bishops .....	22
Warden .....	1
Deans .....	26
Archdeacons .....	26
Parish Priests .....	1,500
Curates .....	3,000
Exclusive of occasional Coadjutor—Bishops, &c.	

I come now to the British Catholic Ecclesiastical Establishment, as it should, of course, be included in any Legislative arrangement for a state provision. I propose to furnish a list of the Catholic Congregations of Great Britain, setting forth those of England and Scotland in the alphabetical order of their respective counties, viz.—

#### ENGLAND.

Catholic Congregations.		Catholic Congregations.	
Bedford .....	1	Dorsetshire .....	7
Berks .....	6	Durham .....	13
Bucks .....	1	Essex .....	6
Cambridge .....	1	Gloucestershire .....	5
Cheshire .....	8	Hants .....	12
Cornwall .....	2	Herefordshire .....	3
Cumberland .....	4	Herts .....	1
Derbyshire .....	8	Kent .....	6
Devonshire .....	9	Lancashire .....	87

Catholic Congregations.		Catholic Congregations.	
Leicestershire .....	7	Suffolk .....	5
Lincolnshire .....	11	Surrey .....	3
Monmouthshire .....	5	Sussex .....	6
Norfolk .....	8	Warwickshire .....	12
Notts .....	3	Westmoreland .....	2
N. Hants .....	3	Wilts .....	3
Northumberland .....	20	Worcestershire .....	8
Oxon .....	8	Yorkshire .....	47
Shropshire .....	7	London and Vicinity .....	25
Somersetshire .....	8		
Staffordshire .....	22	Total in England .....	393
WALES .....			6

#### SCOTLAND.

Aberdeen .....	8	Kircudbrightshire .....	2
Angusshire .....	1	Lanarkshire .....	4
Argyleshire .....	1	Peeblesshire .....	1
Ayrshire .....	4	Renfrewshire .....	2
Banffshire .....	9	Ross-shire .....	1
Buteshire .....	1	Wigtownshire .....	1
Dumbartonshire .....	1		
Dumfriesshire .....	1	Total in Scotland .....	57
Edinburgshire or Mid-Lothian ..	2		
Elgin or Murrayshire .....	1	Total in Great Britain .....	456
Inverness-shire .....	17		

In Great Britain, the Catholic mission is presided over by seven Bishops, who are at present assisted by four coadjutor Bishops—I take it for granted, that there are in each of the seven episcopal districts persons discharging the duties of Dean and Archdeacon; and I do not think it an unreasonable estimate, or average, to allow two Clergymen—namely, one principal Pastor, and one assistant Curate, for each of the 456 congregations.

Coming now to the annual provision for each of the several ranks of Catholic Ecclesiastics, I think the proposed scale of 1825 would average—

To each Archbishop .....	£1,500
Bishop .....	1,000
Dean .....	500
Archdeacon .....	400
Parish Priest in Ireland, or Principal Pastor in Great Britain .....	250
Curate, or Assistant .....	75

According to this scale, the total amount of the annual provision for the Catholic Prelates and Clergy of the United Kingdom would be as follows:—

IRELAND.		Annual Charge.	Total.
4 Archbishops, at 1,500l. each	.....	£6,000	
22 Bishops, at 1,000l. each	.....	22,000	
Warden of Galway	.....	1,000	
27 Deans, at 500l. each	.....	13,500	
27 Archdeacons, at 400l. each	.....	10,800	
1,500 Parish Priests, at 250l. each	.....	375,000	
3,000 Curates, at 75l. each	.....	225,000	
Total annual charge for Ireland			£653,300
GREAT BRITAIN.			
7 Bishops, at 1,000l. each	.....	7,000	
7 Deans, at 500l. each	.....	3,500	
7 Archdeacons at 400l. each	.....	2,800	
456 Principal Pastors, at 250l. each	.....	114,000	
456 Assistant Curates, at 75l. each	.....	34,200	
Total annual charge for Great Britain			161,500
Grand total			£814,800

In addition to this annual charge of 814,800l., there should also be provided means of support for aged and infirm Clergymen, who may be rendered unable to discharge the duties of their respective offices. There would also be, of necessity, other considerable expenses connected with this measure, as new officers and offices, commissioners, &c. &c. which would soon bring the annual charge up to 900,000l.

The first observation to be made upon this proposition of increasing taxation to so large an annual amount is, that it not only is not desired, but is most earnestly resisted by the parties who would be ostensibly the most interested in its establishment—the Catholic Hierarchy and people of Ireland. The former have repeatedly expressed their wishes to receive their support from the flocks whom they serve; and the people have been equally loud in the expression of their desire to be the sole supporters of the pastors whom they revere; and, perhaps, I may be allowed to add, that the fact of the agent of the Catholics of Ireland being the writer of this letter, is, of itself, some evidence of the sincerity of our opposition to this measure.

The following Resolutions of the Irish Bishops indicate their feelings very distinctly:—

*Resolution of the Irish Catholic Bishops, assembled in Synod, 24th July, 1810:—*

“Resolved, That we neither seek nor desire any other earthly consideration for our spiritual ministry to our respective flocks, save what they may, from a sense of religion and duty, voluntarily afford us.”

*Resolution of the Irish Catholic Bishops, assembled in Synod, 25th January, 1826:—*

“Having taken into consideration the project of a provision to be made by law for the support of the Prelates and Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, Resolved, That no such legal provision for our support, and that of our Clergy, will be acceded to by us, until the Catholics of Ireland shall have been emancipated; and that at no period can we accept any such legal provision, unless an acceptance of it be found by us consistent with the independence of our Church, and the integrity of its discipline, as well as with the cordial union and affectionate attachment which has hitherto subsisted between the Catholic Clergy and that faithful people, from whose generous contributions we and our predecessors have, for centuries, derived our support.”

I cannot affect to be ignorant that some expressions of a distinguished Irish Prelate (Dr. Doyle) have been referred to as evidence of a contrary disposition; but, in justice to him and to his opinions, I beg leave to point to his speech at the Preliminary Meeting preceding the Leinster Provincial Meeting, 14th December, 1825:—“My opinion was this, that if the Prelates approved of a provision, emanating from the Treasury—if the Ministers of Christ were to be paid by the Ministers of State for dispensing the mysteries of God—in that case, that I would not create dissension amongst them; but that sooner than my hand should be soiled by it, I would lay down my office at the feet of him who conferred it; for that if my hand were to be stained with Government money, it should never grasp a Crozier, or a Mitre ever afterwards be fitted to my brow.”

I am not aware that the Catholic Prelates, Clergy, or Laity of Great Britain, have published any official declaration of their feelings upon the subject; but my opinion is, that there would be no difference between them and their Irish brethren.

I am, Sir, &c.

ENEAS MACDONNELL.

#### LETTER IV.

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

THE fourth proposition, in the name of a Security, suggested to Parliament, is the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland; and this measure, we are told, is grounded upon the abuses which are stated to have been latterly manifested in the exercise of the elective franchise. These alleged abuses consist in the disobedience of the freeholders to their landlords, and submission to the influence of their Priests. It is not stated that in any instance they voted, or were advised by their Clergy to vote, in a manner injurious to their political interests, or prejudicial to their political fame; and it is notorious, that in most instances the landlord, who sought to exercise full dominion over their franchises, was governed solely by his own feelings, without the slightest regard to those of the freeholders.

In after times it will be subject of reproach to our age that such pretensions should have been, for a moment, tolerated, much less sanctioned by any portion of the Legislature. The whole attempt indicates such a spirit of base and barefaced jobbing, such downright corruption, that one feels shame in being obliged to contend against it. So long as the freeholder was seduced by selfish considerations, or compelled by threats to lay his franchise at the feet of his landlord, without any regard to his own honour, interests, or conscience, there was no complaint against him; but the moment he assumed the right of voting or thinking for himself, and presumed to

exercise his franchise, for the purposes of which, and for which alone, it was granted to him by the Constitution, then he is set down as an offender against Law and Gospel, and denounced as unworthy to enjoy the right, for no other reason than because he had the courage and the honesty, perhaps once in his life, to exercise it conscientiously.

The general objections to disfranchisement of constituents, by their own representatives, are so obvious, and have been so often and so ably urged, that I do not think it necessary to repeat them; but having always thought that the Catholic forty-shilling freeholder of Ireland possessed peculiar claims to legislative protection, some of which have not been sufficiently, if at all, noticed in the discussions on this subject, I shall now endeavour to supply, in part at least, the omission. All the objections now made to the exercise of the elective franchise by forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland, were made to its restoration in 1793. They were fully discussed in the Irish Houses of Lords and Commons, and ultimately and deliberately overruled in each House, as a reference to the debates, and particularly to the speech of the present Lord Ross, will establish. The Act restoring the right having been thus passed into a law, after such full consideration, cannot now be repealed without great injustice and bad faith, nor can it be abolished under the pretence of its repeal being made necessary by unforeseen circumstances. If it should appear that the attainment and enjoyment of this franchise, as well for the poor as for the rich, was the declared primary object of the Catholic Body in 1793, it must be admitted, that the withdrawal of it at the present day would be an atrocious abandonment of the spirit of concession and relief that was avowed in that year; yet, that it was then the primary object of Catholic anxiety, cannot now be questioned by any person informed of the history of that time.

The Irish Catholic Association, or committee of that day, distinctly and unequivocally put it forth as the dearest object of its pursuit, and all the Anti-Catholic Grand Juries, Corporations, &c. were equally distinct



and unequivocal in making its concession the first object of their resistance; so that it had been fully considered, as well out of Parliament as in Parliament, before it was determined upon.

The Petition of the Catholics of Ireland, presented to his late Majesty, January 2, 1792, states—"There remains one incapacity which your loyal subjects, the Catholics of Ireland, feel with most poignant anguish of mind, as being the badge of unmerited disgrace and ignominy, and the cause and bitter aggravation of all our other calamities. We are deprived of the elective franchise, to the manifest perversion of the spirit of the Constitution; and we most humbly implore your Majesty to believe, that this *our prime and heavy grievance* is not an evil merely speculative, but is attended with great distress to all ranks, and in many instances with the total ruin and destruction of the lower orders of your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, the Catholics of Ireland." Thus was the elective franchise sought for, in a particular manner, for the enjoyment of the lower orders, and for their advantage, though it is now not unfrequently insisted upon, by ignorant men, that it never was intended to extend the franchise to that class of the people. In the same spirit, the same Catholic Committee of 1792, in all its circulars, declared its first object to be, "to procure for the Catholics the elective franchise;" and particularly in their circular "on the manner of conducting the election of delegates," to the Committee, they address themselves emphatically to the Catholic Clergy, in the following words:—"The Clergy, being the natural guardians of morality, will undoubtedly consent to co-operate with the Laity, when they consider that the restoration of the elective franchise to the Catholic community will tend to prevent those perjuries which are so common at, and which disgrace the return of electioneering contests." In the same manner, the Committee, in its authentic and published "Vindication of the Conduct and Principles of the Catholics of Ireland," observes, "there remains one disqualification yet unmentioned, which the Catholics of Ireland feel *more seriously than all others*—they are excluded from the elective franchise."

The language of Mr. Secretary Hobart, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 1793, when introducing the Bill of Catholic Relief in the Irish Parliament, places beyond all doubt the deliberate intention of the framers of the law to extend the elective franchise to every order of the community. "*My first object* (said he), and *what the Roman Catholics seem to have at heart*, is the right of voting at elections for Members of Parliament; this I wished to have *restored* to them. Many opinions have been maintained with respect to the limitations under which this right should be extended to Roman Catholics; but under all the circumstances of the case, I would recommend the *unlimited extension of this franchise*. By this the main object would be better answered, and I think it more becoming the House, either not to grant at all, or to *grant liberally*. I hope you will concur in granting it *without limitation*; for if there were any reserve or limitation, there would still remain a sore place in the Roman Catholic mind."

This clause in the relief bill was also fully considered in the Irish House of Lords, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 1793. Lord Enniskillen "gave it his decided negative, and moved that the clause be expunged."

"The Lord Chancellor, Clare, spoke in the defence and support of the clause, and opposed, of course, the motion for its expunction. His Lordship agreed, that *this clause contained the very principle and essence of the bill*, and that to reject it would be to defeat every object *both of the Catholics and the legislature*."

"Lord Farnham also supported the clause on a similar ground."

"The Archbishop of Cashell said, he should not vote against the clause, because it *seemed to contain the leading principle* of a Bill, originally recommended by his Majesty, framed by his Ministers in this country, approved by the other House of Parliament, and generally accorded to as the sense of the people without doors."

The question was put and carried for the clause against Lord Enniskillen's motion. The numbers stood:—

For the clause	-	-	-	39
Against it	-	-	-	6

No impartial or honest legislator, who may be informed of these facts, can any longer doubt but that the extension of the elective franchise to all classes of the community was distinctly contemplated and intended by the Parliament that restored that important right to the Irish Catholic Body in 1793.

It is, moreover, to be considered that the elective franchise was restored to the Catholic Body eight years prior to the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and was an existing right enjoyed by the people of Ireland at the period of the enactment of that convention by the two Parliaments, and that it was not then disturbed or altered, or questioned; at the same time that its operation at elections, and its enjoyment by the lower orders, as well as of Roman Catholics as of Protestants, was then manifest and uncontrolled. And here I may observe, that the lower orders of Irish Protestants were in the habit of exercising that franchise before 1793, in the same manner as it has been exercised by them and the Roman Catholics since that time; and that, in fact, the only effect of the Bill of 1793 was to place the Catholics upon the same footing with the Protestants, and, by no means, to alter the nature of the franchise, or to extend it to any other species or amount of property than that to which it was extended prior to 1793, and which never was objected to, so long as it was enjoyed by Protestants, exclusively.

Now, as the Act of Union deprived Ireland of two-thirds of its representative rights, by reducing its Members from 300 to 100, at the same time that the number of English Representatives was upheld without any reduction, nothing could be a more flagrant violation of honest or decency than, after such a conventional settlement, under which Ireland made such heavy sacrifices, to require from her, at this day, a reduction or abandonment of her elective rights also. Common honesty would, on the contrary, suggest that the right of election should rather be extended, as some compensation for such a reduction of the right of representation; and I have, therefore, not the slightest hesitation in insisting, that any alteration in the election system that

would operate a diminution of the elective rights, as at present possessed by the forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland, would be an unwarrantable infraction of the Legislative Union, as well as an unconstitutional spoliation of public rights, and, as such, open to the farthest extent of popular objection and opposition that the spirit of British law would sanction or tolerate.

The exercise of this right must, of course, be subject to the incidents, passions, and excitements of the hour, but its existence never should be disturbed or questioned; and, really, when we bear in mind that the great body of the Irish people are Catholics, it cannot be deemed strange that the majority of the electors should also be Catholics, and, as such, feel deeply indignant and vilified, when contemplating their condition in the State, produced, in a principal degree, by the misconduct or neglect of their nominal Representatives in Parliament. The necessity and the good results of the active attention of the Catholic electors to their own elective rights cannot be better proved, than by a reference to the fact, that when the Catholic claims were brought before the Commons of the Imperial Parliament in 1805, forty-four Irish Representatives voted against Emancipation, and only twenty-nine in favour of it!!

Nothing could be more impolitic than the revival of any attempt to disfranchise the 40s. freeholders of Ireland. It would naturally and almost necessarily lead to further investigations of the legislative system of this country. Assuredly, for example, if the exercise of the 40s. elective franchise be questionable, the privilege of the Peer to vote by proxy is not less so. The freeholder may be one of five or ten thousand voters, whose united force does not constitute a greater legislative power than is confided to a single Peer. Nor is this a speculative evil with the Irish Catholic. On the contrary, the repeated rejections by the House of Lords, of measures for Catholic relief passed by the House of Commons, and the refusal of the Lords, in the last Session, to accede to the Resolution of the Commons in favour of the Catholics, all prove the actual injury sustained by them, and that such injury is inflicted by the House of Peers. This injury may be

inflicted by a few individuals, or even one, as on the 1st July, 1812, who never heard the question proposed or discussed, and, of course, could not have exercised any judgment or reason upon it. No man will allege that the exercise of the elective franchise in Ireland is more opposed to common sense or common decency than such a practice, or stands so much in need of revision and amendment. Similar observations may be suggested in reference to other practices of the Legislative Estates, should the exercise of the 40s. franchise be again canvassed, in an affected spirit of Constitutional jealousy; and who can tell where such an inquiry or its results would end?

The imputations of undue influence cast abroad against the Catholic Clergy of Ireland, may be disposed of by this solitary observation—that those who have been most clamorous in making the charge, have uniformly failed in proving, or even attempting to prove its truth. That the Clergy have occasionally advised their confiding flocks, not only is not denied, but should be referred to as the proudest demonstration of their virtue. Their whole advice consisted in urging a preference to truth and conscience over falsehood and deceit; and they would have been base, indeed, had they shrunk from aiding, by their counsels, that honest peasantry which has so many claims upon their consideration.

Moreover, it is to be considered, that the Catholic Clergymen of Ireland did not interfere with the political pretensions of the landlords, until the landlords had interfered with the religious duties of the Clergymen, by endeavours to sow dissensions between the Catholic pastors and their flocks, and for that purpose, using the influence of their station, and the supposed dependence of the poor people upon them, to enforce a system of education obnoxious to the religious principles of both pastors and people. Any person who will take the trouble of comparing dates, will find that the landlords, as a body, were the aggressors; and as they provoked hostility, let them endure its consequences.

This much would suffice on the subject of clerical influence, were it not that all these securities are in part demanded upon the same false pretences of a necessity

to guard against such influence. For my own part, viewing the condition of Ireland and all its distractions and discontents, I consider the influence of the Catholic Priesthood a great national blessing, and would be happy to increase and extend its powers. All persons admit that the general conduct of the people committed to their pastoral care, indicates the possession of generous and charitable principles. It is worse than absurd to deny that they must be in some degree indebted to their religious teachers for such dispositions, particularly when the possession of such influence is ascribed to those teachers. The desire and labour unceasingly engaged in advancing the spiritual and temporal interests of the people necessarily obtains an influence, and that of the best kind; and the experience that it is always used for the benefit of the giver, insures its continuance.

Those who allege, that the influence of the Catholic Clergy of Ireland is directed against the Sovereign or his Government, well know the falsehood of their own allegations; and the cruelty of this calumny is the less pardonable, when it is notorious that no portion of the King's subjects has been so much dreaded and detested as the same Clergy by the avowed enemies of that Sovereign and Government. Thus we find, that when the invasion of Ireland was contemplated by the French Republic, in 1796, the influence of the Irish Catholic Clergy was considered the greatest obstacle to the success of the invasion.

The views of the French Government, and of Mr. Wolfe Tone, the promoter of that invasion, as to the political bias of the Catholic Clergy of Ireland, may be collected from his journal for that year, from which I beg leave to make the following extracts:—"I also added (said Tone, in his account of an interview with the French Minister De la Croix), that I had a strong objection to letting Priests into the business at all; that most of them were enemies to the French Revolution (March 11)." "He (General Clarke) then came to the influence of the Catholic Clergy over the minds of the people, and the apprehension that they might warp them against France (March 14)." "He (General Clarke) dwelt a little on

the nobles and clergy; and I replied, as I had done in the former conversation. He said he was satisfied that nothing was to be expected from either; and I answered, that he might expect all the opposition they could give (March 21)." "Clarke then, after some civilities, in reply, asked me what I thought of some of the Irish priests yet remaining in France? I answered, that he knew my opinion as to priests of all kinds: that in Ireland they had acted all along execrably; that they hated the very name of the French Revolution (March 27)." "I objected all along to priests, as the worst of all possible agents (April 3)." "Clarke has also some doubts as to my report on the influence of the Irish priests, which he dreads a good deal (April 13)." "He (Gen. Hoche) then asked me, what I thought of the priests, or was it likely they would give us any trouble? I replied, I certainly did not calculate on their assistance (July 12)."

Here then we find the prime mover of the hostile invasion, together with two members of the French Republican Government, and the invading General, all concurring in distrust and abhorrence of those Irish Clergy, against whose alleged hostile dispositions towards the State, we are told, all these Securities are necessary!!

The Catholic Priests of Ireland have been, for many years, exposed to the most wanton and unwarranted vituperation of calumniators of all orders. Their principles and conduct have been misrepresented in and out of Parliament; and it is, therefore, not to be wondered at that their feelings should be deeply wounded. But, notwithstanding all this excitement and provocation, they have always proved to be the best promoters of public good, and the best preservers of public order. It is, therefore, the grossest injustice to allege, that any measures are required as securities against men, without whose aid the peace of Ireland could not be preserved for one hour. The best security that can exist for the maintenance of the peace is that religion whose principles they inculcate, and by whose ordinances they have been governed.

Let us hear no more, then, of these false and odious pretences of the necessity for Securities. At present the Protestant establishment possesses most extraordinary

securities.—The doctrines of self-interest, the power of existing laws, the vigilance of Government and Parliament, and the obligations of solemn oaths, bind the Catholic Laity to the maintenance of the Government; and the experience of the past conduct of the Catholic Prelates and Clergy should prevent any declarations of distrust towards them.

Add to this, that the Protestant hierarchy is most abundantly represented by the Bishops in the Upper House of Parliament, while the second order of Protestant Clergy are enabled to vote for Representatives in the Lower House; and in both Houses of Parliament the friends and near relatives of the hierarchy constitute majorities. All these are connected with the Crown by the constitution of the Established Church, which gives to the Crown the appointment of all the Bishops, and to the Lord Chancellor—an officer removable at the will of the Crown—the appointment to all the Deaneries, and more than one thousand livings in Great Britain; which is a larger numerical Church patronage than is possessed by all the Bishops of England, put together; the livings in their gift amounting only to 981, being precisely the same number, to the single unit, and, it is a curious coincidence, as the number of benefices in the gift of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland.

To those who are only anxious to possess reasonable securities for the Protestant Institutions, these must appear more than sufficient; but those who wish, by the demand of securities, to perpetuate the present system in all its horrors, never can be satisfied, and never should be consulted. For what are the results of the system which they desire to maintain? We find them consist in the vicious administration of justice, the perversion of religion, the neglect of education, the neutralization of natural resources, the disorganization of society, the vilification of national fame, the maintenance of standing armies, the deficiency of the revenue, dissensions in the King's Government, and collisions between the two Houses of Parliament.—Those who wish for the continuance of such a system are well justified in calling aloud for Securities, to ensure its permanency. But let them beware; bad as these evils are, there may yet come worse.

No man will dare to prophecy the future results, though none can refuse to imagine them. Some may go so far as to think it possible that the bloodless conflict may continue; that no recruits may be raised from Catholic Ireland for the Army or Navy (and what would England now be without them?); that no Catholic youths would seek instruction in the Dublin University; that the links of society may be severed, and rents, tithes, and taxes, be erased from the list of obligations.

If such results of the present system be possible, (and who will say that they are not possible?) can any reasonable or loyal man be so enamoured of it as to require securities for its continuance?

Let us not, either, be threatened with "fearless legislation." The Catholics of Ireland know well how to meet this fearless legislation; for what is the Penal Code itself but legislation? and yet it yields to the advances of justice and of public opinion. Let justice be the guide and director of every measure of relief that may be proposed or approved. Let Catholic feelings be well considered, and this doctrine of fearless legislation be scouted from the Council Chamber. We find the Government ready to communicate with any body of manufacturers or traders on questions affecting their pursuits. This day we read of intended conferences between the Home Secretary and the citizens of London upon subjects affecting their franchises, such as the warrants of Magistrates. Then why should not the Government communicate with the Catholics now as was done in 1792? Surely it would be as reasonable to consult with the aggrieved party, as with those who seek to continue the grievances.

I conclude this correspondence with the repetition of our prayer, that the great settlement may be founded on principles of peace and charity, and mutual confidence. This can be effected by the simple repeal of the laws that aggrieve us, and that repeal will prove to be the best support of the Empire, the best ally of the Crown, and the best security of the Constitution.

I am, &c.

ENEAS MACDONNELL.

SINCE I commenced the publication of these letters, the unaltered and unalterable hostility of the Catholics of Ireland to these and similar arrangements or conditions has been further illustrated by their distinct and unequivocal declarations.

At an aggregate meeting of the Catholics of Ireland, held in the city of Dublin, on Tuesday, the 16th December last, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved—That ardently desirous, as we are, of civil liberty, we are, however, infinitely more anxious to preserve the faith of our fathers, and our own, from any contamination or taint whatsoever; and we therefore repudiate and reject any plan of emancipation with, or in anywise including any infringement of, or intermeddling with, the doctrines or discipline of our holy religion.

Resolved—That whilst we give our undivided allegiance to the Sovereign and the State in all matters whatsoever of a temporal and political nature, we equally sever from the State, and dedicate to God all matters of a purely spiritual, religious, and ecclesiastical nature; and we therefore will not accept of Emancipation coupled with any species of interference with the tenets, doctrine, or discipline of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Resolved—That we equally abhor and reject any State provision or payment of our Clergy by the Government, and we deem it a solemn and sacred duty to declare emphatically and irrevocably, that we infinitely prefer remaining in our present state of unjust degradation and oppression, to obtaining relief accompanied by any species of Government provision for the Catholic Clergy of Ireland.

Resolved—That the conduct of the Forty-shilling Freeholders of Ireland demands our most enthusiastic gratitude and respect, and that we deem any attempt to deprive them of their franchises a direct violation of the Constitution; concurring in this sentiment with two of our bitterest enemies, the late Earl of Liverpool and Mr. Peel; who, on a former occasion, publicly declared, "that any person consenting to such disfranchisement was a traitor to the Constitution; and undeserving of participating in the advantages of that Constitution."

Resolved—That we would prefer a perpetual exclusion from our remaining civil rights, to any Emancipation coupled with any limitation or diminution of the elective franchise.

Resolved—That the best security of the Government is to be found in the happiness and freedom of the people, and that we are ready to give, in return for Emancipation, the security of our interests, our allegiance, and our oaths;



but we are bound to declare, that any conditions annexed to the restoration of our rights would be only an increase of danger to the State.

In addition to these solemn and explicit declarations, the Catholic Association of Ireland thought it right, at the moment of its dissolution, on the 12th of this month, to promulgate the feelings of the body upon this most important subject, in the following emphatic terms:—

That any Bill of Emancipation, accompanied with an encroachment upon the rights of the Forty-shilling Freeholders, or with any interference, direct or indirect, on the part of the Crown, with the discipline of the Catholic Church in Ireland, *would, instead of giving peace to this distracted country, only produce deep and general discontent, and rouse every manly breast to the most decided opposition.* That should such measures be introduced, every parish would be bound instantly to assemble, to denounce in the strongest terms, an attack upon the rights of men, whose constitutional conduct constitutes their only crime, and any intermeddling with a Priesthood, who, for virtue, piety, and implicit obedience to the laws, are revered throughout the civilized world.

February 23. 1829.